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MARVIN A. KASTENBAUM
Director of Statistics

August 4, 1977

Edwin J. Jacob, Esquire
Messrs. Jacob & Medinger
1270 Avenue of the Americas
Rockefeller Center
New York, New York 10020

Dear Ed:

Pursuant to your request in a letter to Horace Kornegay dated April 1, 1977, I am enclosing my analysis of Jain's paper on cigarette smoking, oral contraceptives and myocardial infarction. I hope you can appreciate the reasons for the long delay in my response. It has been very difficult, during the past few months, to spend more than a few hours at any one time on this project. As you well know, adequate research cannot be done this way.

What I have done, in bits and pieces, is to reconstruct almost all of Jain's calculations that are relevant to nonfatal myocardial infarction. I have not been able to figure out how he applied Fisher's exact test, or why he chose to apply this statistical test to selective groupings of the data. His arithmetic appears to be correct. Nonetheless, his interpretation and inferences concerning, what he calls, "relative risks," may be specious.

The principal source for his data is a 1975 paper by Mann et al in the British Medical Journal. All the usual questions dealing with such things as sample size, randomness, representativeness, selectivity, hospital populations, etc., may be raised about the data. I believe the Jain study is vulnerable to attack in this area as well as in his abuse of some fundamentals of statistical inference. However, I do not feel that any of these arguments will counteract the bad press we had several months ago. Hopefully they may serve us in other forums in the future.

I realize that my analysis is far from complete. If there are any other specific questions that you have, I will have a second crack at Jain when time permits.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,


Marvin A. Kastenbaum

cc: Horace R. Kornegay

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